
**UTAH CODE PROVISIONS ON
EDUCATION IN AMERICAN HISTORY, GOVERNMENT, AND CIVICS**

53A-13-101.4. Study and posting of American heritage documents.

(1) The Legislature recognizes that a proper understanding of American history and government is essential to good citizenship, and that the public schools are the primary public institutions charged with responsibility for assisting children and youth in gaining that understanding.

(2) (a) The State Board of Education and local school boards shall periodically review school curricula and activities to ensure that effective instruction in American history and government is taking place in the public schools.

(b) The boards shall solicit public input as part of the review process.

(3) School curricula and activities shall include the appropriate study of historical documents such as:

(a) the Declaration of Independence;

(b) the United States Constitution;

(c) the national motto;

(d) the pledge of allegiance;

(e) the national anthem;

(f) the Mayflower Compact;

(g) the writings, speeches, documents, and proclamations of the Founders and the Presidents of the United States;

(h) organic documents from the pre-Colonial, Colonial, Revolutionary, Federalist, and post Federalist eras;

(i) United States Supreme Court decisions;

(j) Acts of the United States Congress, including the published text of the Congressional Record; and

(k) United States treaties.

(4) To increase student understanding of, and familiarity with, American historical documents, public schools may display historically important excerpts from, or copies of, those documents in school classrooms and common areas as appropriate.

(5) There shall be no content-based censorship of American history and heritage documents referred to in this section due to their religious or cultural nature.

(6) Public schools shall display "In God we trust," which is declared in 36 U.S.C. 302 to be the national motto of the United States, in one or more prominent places within each school building.

53A-13-101.6. Instruction on the flag of the United States of America.

(1) In accordance with Title 63G, Chapter 3, Utah Administrative Rulemaking Act, the State Board of Education shall provide by rule for a program of instruction within the public schools relating to the flag of the United States.

(2) The instruction shall include the history of the flag, etiquette, customs pertaining to the display and use of the flag, and other patriotic exercises as provided by Sections 36 U.S.C. 170 to 177.

- (3) (a) The pledge of allegiance to the flag shall be recited:
- (i) at the beginning of the day in each elementary public school in the state; and
 - (ii) once a week at the beginning of a school day in each public secondary school in the state.
- (b) Each student shall be informed by posting a notice in a conspicuous place that the student has the right not to participate in reciting the pledge.
- (c) A student shall be excused from reciting the pledge upon written request from the student's parent or legal guardian.

53A-13-109. Civic and Character Education -- Definitions -- Legislative finding -- Elements.

- (1) As used in this section:
- (a) "Character Education" means reaffirming values and qualities of character which promote an upright and desirable citizenry.
 - (b) "Civic Education" means the cultivation of informed, responsible participation in political life by competent citizens committed to the fundamental values and principles of representative democracy in Utah and the United States.
 - (c) "Values" means time-established principles or standards of worth.
- (2) The Legislature recognizes that:
- (a) Civic and Character Education are fundamental elements of the public education system's core mission as originally intended and established under Article X of the Utah Constitution;
 - (b) Civic and Character Education are fundamental elements of the constitutional responsibility of public education and shall be a continuing emphasis and focus in public schools;
 - (c) the cultivation of a continuing understanding and appreciation of representative democracy in Utah and the United States among succeeding generations of educated and responsible citizens is important to the nation and state;
 - (d) the primary responsibility for the education of children within the state resides with their parents or guardians and that the role of state and local governments is to support and assist parents in fulfilling that responsibility;
 - (e) public schools fulfill a vital purpose in the preparation of succeeding generations of informed and responsible citizens who are deeply attached to essential democratic values and institutions; and
 - (f) the happiness and security of American society relies upon the public virtue of its citizens which requires a united commitment to a moral social order where self-interests are willingly subordinated to the greater common good.
- (3) Through an integrated curriculum, students shall be taught in connection with regular school work:
- (a) honesty, integrity, morality, civility, duty, honor, service, and obedience to law;
 - (b) respect for and an understanding of the Declaration of Independence and the Constitutions of the United States and of the State of Utah;
 - (c) Utah history, including territorial and preterritorial development to the present;

- (d) the essentials and benefits of the free enterprise system;
- (e) respect for parents, home, and family;
- (f) the dignity and necessity of honest labor; and
- (g) other skills, habits, and qualities of character which will promote an upright and desirable citizenry and better prepare students to recognize and accept responsibility for preserving and defending the blessings of liberty inherited from prior generations and secured by the constitution.

(4) Local school boards and school administrators may provide training, direction, and encouragement, as needed, to accomplish the intent and requirements of this section and to effectively emphasize Civic and Character Education in the course of regular instruction in the public schools.

(5) Civic and Character Education in public schools are:

- (a) not intended to be separate programs in need of special funding or added specialists to be accomplished; and

- (b) core principles which reflect the shared values of the citizens of Utah and the founding principles upon which representative democracy in the United States and the state of Utah are based.